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## *The Church and Demobilization*



THE CHURCH  
*and*  
DEMOBILIZATION

By  
J. GORDON CHAMBERLIN



ABINGDON-COKESBURY PRESS  
NEW YORK • NASHVILLE

THE CHURCH AND DEMOBILIZATION

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PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

To *STEPHEN*

MAY HIS GENERATION INHERIT  
A WORLD OF JUSTICE AND ORDER



## INTRODUCTION

*IT IS MY HOPE* that this book may help lift the problems of demobilization above the level of sentimental interest so we can see our responsibility in the years ahead as something more than handing out rewards to several million discharged servicemen.

This is not a book about the individual adjustment problems veterans may face. A number of good books have been written in this field, notably *Soldier to Civilian* by Dr. George K. Pratt. Neither is it an attempt to describe the wartime experiences of servicemen and women—the starting point of demobilization. That has been done by the brave company of wartime reporters such as Ernie Pyle, Robert Sherrod, Ira Wolfert, Richard Tregaskis, Ralph Ingersoll, and John Mason Brown.

Here I shall attempt to present a perspective by which the church can view the whole range of problems related to demobilization and see its own task clearly, to outline principles and prac-

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tical steps local churches may take in performing that task, and to help develop an understanding of the continued demands that will be upon us for many years.

My secondary purpose in writing this book is to help defend the veterans from a great wave of wholesale exploitation. Some churches already are becoming—unwittingly—a party to this exploitation. Some of it is premeditated and intentional; but the more serious, and the more difficult to check, is the exploitation of those who mean well, the sincerely sympathetic, genuinely devoted friends and relatives who do not realize the harm they are doing.

Some people now say they will do anything for the "boys," but their short-term concern is likely to wane tomorrow. An official of the Veterans' Administration remarked in private conversation recently: "We are pretty cynical of those who have jumped on the band wagon and are terribly interested in doing something for the veterans. That interest usually lasts only as long as the men are in uniform."

Anyone with a special cause to plead likes to claim that veterans share his views. Proponents of free enterprise are certain all veterans look forward to the blessings of competition. Internationalists insist veterans will demand international co-operation. Critics of the church—in their understandable impatience with her weaknesses—try to

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exploit the veteran by crediting to all veterans their own captious attitudes toward the church.

Among the exploiters are those who think our soldiers are "so wonderful," businessmen who display service flags for men they never intend to rehire, those who raise money to paint the church so it will be "ready to welcome the boys," advertisers who play up the front-line ordeals of the fighting man or the loneliness or grief of his young wife in advertising commercial products. The church cannot point the finger of criticism at these exploiters if the church also attempts to catch the attention and interest of the veteran by similarly questionable means. Representative Charles M. LaFollette of Indiana complained on the floor of the House about such exploiters: "It seems we cannot discuss a single issue without someone dragging in the boys on the fighting fronts either as opponents or as supporters of the question at issue."

But this is only the beginning. When millions of uniforms have been laid aside for overalls, business suits, and aprons, then the veteran can become the darling of the politician, the heartthrob of the matron, the problem for the social worker, and the perennial "illustration" for the preacher.

It has happened before. It must not happen again. We owe far more to those who have risked their lives for us. But even more, we owe it to the future to receive back our sons, brothers, fathers,

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and husbands as sons, brothers, fathers, and husbands rather than simply as veterans. Their welfare will be best served when all of society to which they shall return is well served. They are our flesh and blood; they deserve to be welcomed as equals. They are not problems, but with us they must face the problems of a terribly upsetting period for our nation and for the world. To help us understand our task and how we can face it successfully is the purpose of this book.

I owe more than appreciation to many people who have assisted both directly and indirectly in the shaping of this book, particularly to Harold Ehrensparger for many constructive criticisms of the manuscript and numerous encouraging suggestions. I am deeply indebted to the Department of Christian Education of Adults, General Board of Education, The Methodist Church, and its director, M. Leo Rippy, for the privilege of serving on its staff for over a year. During that time my assignment gave an opportunity to make the special study of demobilization problems which provided much of the material for this book.

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# I

## DEMOBILIZATION

### I

*DEMOBILIZATION* from World War II is a process rather than an event. It began at Pearl Harbor with the discharge of men so badly wounded that they could not be rehabilitated for further military service. It will continue as long as America has millions of men and women in the armed forces. Nearly two million men have already been discharged from service. Millions more will have the same experience during the next few years. Yet it is not the same experience for any two men. Each man has his own peculiar background, wartime experience, attitudes, desires, and prospects of civilian life. This fact both limits the possibilities of foreseeing the effects of the demobilization process and makes imperative more adequate preparation for what cannot be foreseen.

Demobilization must not be thought of as simply the process by which *servicemen* return to civilian life. If that were all, perhaps we should

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know better how to deal with the problem. While more than twelve million men and women have been uprooted to serve in uniform, an even larger number have been uprooted to become migrating workers manning the machines that have produced the machines of war. War workers must be "demobilized" also. Thus, there is a double problem confronting the nation. Although the demobilization process has continued throughout the entire war, the major demobilization period is now upon us—the fighting is over and forces not needed for occupation duty will be returning to this country in staggering numbers. At the same time, war workers will be seeking peacetime jobs, industry will be in the throes of reconversion, and the nation will be concerned with its international responsibilities toward stabilizing a peaceful post-war world.

The dangers in the demobilization process are dual. On the one hand, there are millions of individuals—each of them different—subjected to re-integration into a civilian, peacetime community. Out of that process will emerge a plethora of personal problems which, if left unsolved on a wide scale, will create social dynamite. On the other hand, there are larger social problems involving both national and international relations. These must be met at the same time, and their solution has a definite relationship to the successful reintegration of individuals. Employment is both a

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social problem for the nation and an indispensable ingredient in successful reintegration. Employment problems touch at many points—world trade, reconversion, disposal of war plants and surplus goods, the economic health of other nations, political decisions, and conflicts in Congress.

Thus, demobilization will be a process in American life which will force communities, social institutions, families, churches, individuals—the whole country—to face the complex dangers of a fateful period in American life. There was only one answer to what America would do after Pearl Harbor—she would fight. With the tremendous latent industrial power of the country the machines of war were fashioned, and with prodigal expenditure of equipment, men, and energy, she vowed to fight until unconditional surrender—which she did. Unfortunately, there is no similarly defined answer that inevitably draws the nation toward some peacetime destiny. America is uncertain just what she wants to do with her latent power now that the war is over. Her military success has given her prestige, but at the same time it has created the possibility of enmity on the part of weaker nations. Her higher standards of living have helped keep her from a spiritual affinity with other people that is essential as a foundation for lasting peace. She has no genuine desire that they shall have commensurate material standards. Her recent isolationism may have been pruned, but

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new forms of political and economic imperialism continue to sprout among us. These international uncertainties and dangers have parallel domestic uncertainties where the future depends on successive decisions. That America can meet and surmount the difficulties of her new era is too profound and significant a matter to be faced on the basis of either optimism or pessimism. Now is the time to consider the alternatives ahead and to prepare for the less overt but equally meaningful struggle of peace. By meeting the larger social problems of the immediate postwar years and by successfully reintegrating the returning veterans and war workers, America may be able to make her full contribution to the building of the just and abiding peace for which the world yearns.

### II

Our nation has a meager backlog of experience on which to draw for guidance in facing demobilization problems. Two experiences give the country some idea of what demobilization may be like. First, what happened after World War I may throw some light on what may happen to us after this war. Secondly, the records of servicemen who have been discharged during this war may indicate some of the problems which will arise when large numbers of others return.

It is the contrasts between the two wars, rather

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than their similarities, that are most obvious. The United States, in World War I only nineteen months, put 4,800,000 men in arms, but sent only 2,000,000 overseas. At home an "all-out effort" found only 9,000,000 men and women in war work, about 30 per cent of the national income earmarked for war purposes, and no soldier under twenty-one sent into combat. In World War II the United States shared forty-four months of fighting between Pearl Harbor and VJ Day. Nearly 14,000,000 men and women have been in uniform; more than 7,000,000 of them have seen duty overseas. This time there are about 35,000,000 war workers, and some 65 per cent of the national income is being spent for the war. Casualties have passed 1,000,000, with 20 per cent of that number killed.

The question is: Can the experiences of a relatively short war fought on one continent give any guidance to help us understand the possible effects of a longer and truly global war? Any hard and fast answer can come only from those who are willing to wait and see, and report decades from now what parallels they discovered. But the rest of us cannot wait. We must seek what guidance is at hand and go forward.

The most valuable guidance from our experience in World War I consists of warnings. We dare not allow those who return this time to sell apples and souvenirs on the streets because they

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are penniless. We must be prepared to prevent race riots like those that broke out during the months after that war. The boom and depression sequel must not be the aftermath of this war. What happened before should be our warning now against the social gulf which helped draw veterans into self-seeking organizations set off from the rest of the community, and particularly from the churches. Surely we do not want a repetition of the gaudy, gay twenties.

The second source of guidance is the experience the nation has had already through the discharge of nearly two million veterans since Pearl Harbor. However, this may not be so important except in certain minor details. Large groups of men were discharged because they were overage, some of them having been in service only a few weeks. Others were discharged because in the screening process at induction centers or basic training camps they were found unsuited for military service. For these men the frustration of being rejected may be a personal problem, but they were in military life a very short time and are hardly typical of those discharged after combat. A third large group of men discharged during the war were those who had nervous or mental disabilities either revealed or brought on by combat. Some of these were discharged to mental institutions and may not re-enter normal civilian life for years. Others, having received treatment, were

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sent back to their homes to attempt to regain once again their place in civilian life. Tragic as many of these cases may be, great though the church's responsibility for them may be, these men do not represent the large numbers who will be returning now that the fighting is over. The great majority of those who will come back after the war will be those who did *not* have mental or nervous disabilities making them unsuitable for further military service. They were sufficiently adjusted both physically and emotionally to serve to the end of the war. The proper approach to one group may be the worst approach to the other.

A fourth large group comprises the physically wounded and disabled. Here may be a parallel, for among those who will be demobilized will be thousands of men who were wounded and were patched and sent back to the front lines. Welcoming the wounded during the war will be similar to welcoming the wounded after the war. There is, therefore, some opportunity for the experience we have had in welcoming discharged men to prepare us for the demobilization period, but it is very slight.

A frank appraisal of the value of these two experiences is crucial to proper preparation for the postwar period. The minister who works with Bill when he comes back may be tempted to think that Jack's problems can be solved in the same way as Bill's. The college which enrolls a thousand

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disabled discharged men now must beware of thinking that the larger number to be demobilized later will react the same way, and need the same program, as those now on the campus. Veterans' service centers now working with discharged men and women may be tempted to adopt policies for future work based on wartime experience. Veterans' organizations may be rudely awakened when they find that their wartime activities for securing members has no carry-over into the postwar period when the veterans of this war find their primary outlet in organizations of their own creation. The community to which at first only a few at a time return may be lulled into thinking it need make no adjustments to meet the problems of a later greater influx.

Demobilization after World War II will be a new experience for America. We cannot depend on past experience. We will have to find our way as we go along.

### III

Imagination will have to take the place of experience. There are certain obvious problems in the process of demobilization which can be anticipated. One of these is the problem of *timing*.

The problem of timing is created by uncertainty. No one has known when the war would be over. Overnight, military demands have been completely changed. Deployment and redeploy-

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ment of troops have been suddenly arrested. There will be new problems of logistics—will ships be available to transport men home or must they be used to take relief supplies to China and other countries? There will be problems of occupation—how many specialists, how many enlisted men will be needed? All these things create new uncertainties.

This uncertainty is as disruptive to the individual as to the civilian community. A year's delay in a soldier's discharge may mean a complete change in his prospects for education, marriage, or employment. How can the individual plan ahead when he does not know whether he will be sent home or to a hospital, whether he will be sent to Mobile or Moline, whether he will go back to school, go into business, or just loaf? Then there is always the chance that he will go back to military life if he does not like being a civilian.

The uncertainty connected with the demobilization process means that specific planning is almost impossible. The rate of discharge in a particular community seriously affects the ability of employment agencies, information and service centers, to meet their responsibility. The rate of discharge also directly affects the interest of the people of the community in what is being done. When a large group of men return about the same time, the tendency is for clubs, lodges, business organizations, and churches to be spurred to ac-

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tion. Perhaps a committee is organized, jobs are sought, integration and readjustment is the concern of everyone as the wheels start turning. But a minor change in military policy could mean that no discharged men would return to that community for a number of months, and the almost inevitable tendency would be for the wheels to slow down, employment opportunities to close up, the community committee to disband, even to the extent of forgetting responsibility to those already returned.

Identical problems arise in defense centers when production of a particular item stops. The sudden unemployment may be temporary while machines are retooled, or it may be permanent and workers leave to seek jobs in other communities. Schools, churches, clubs, shops, and community services close. And who knows how the emigrating workers will be received in the next community?

Who is to blame? No one. It is true that communities *should* be ready for any eventuality, that committees *should* be prepared for long-term service. But need is the readiest incentive to community service, and when the need seems to decline interest also declines, and so does the generosity that might support a service program. The almost certain consequence is that the community will drift back into the stronger current of "the same old things."

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The uncertainties which will bedevil planning for demobilization grow from the derivative nature of the whole range of demobilization problems. Demobilization is not a process of its own making—it has no independent "social status." Whatever it is results from what has gone before. It is the point of contact between war and peace. Thus, timing is a problem for military authorities, for community agencies, for churches, and for the individuals involved. The need is not so much to be doing many things now, but to make preparations undismayed by the variety of changes, and the endless waiting.

Waiting is one of the tests of war. "Marching and waiting are what battles are made of—for the soldiers and the junior officers who do the fighting in them. The killing and the getting killed are the punctuation marks between long sentences of waiting and marching, marching and waiting . . ."<sup>1</sup> Civilians also wait. They wait for word from son or husband, wait for him to be discharged, wait for him to come home. And sometimes the waiting is long. Committees must wait, churches must wait, community agencies must wait. Essential to good preparation for demobilization service is the ability to wait and patiently to develop a program flexible and varied enough to meet the changes that are now upon us.

<sup>1</sup> Ralph Ingersoll, *The Battle Is the Pay-Off* (Harcourt, Brace, 1943), p. 159.

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Another problem that can be anticipated is that of *numbers and variety*. Clearly, this is not separate from the problem of timing but rather a part of it. The problem of numbers is that the vast groups of individuals—both military and civilian—involved in demobilization are too great to be handled by the government, by any one agency, or according to any one plan. Reintegration must become the concern of many groups, agencies, and communities. Decentralization of responsibility is inevitable. This gives rise to the problem. A very keen interest and a ready determination on the part of the nation to pay its debt to those who have fought for it can be translated into action only by smaller units than the nation or the states. Thus, the way the nation repays its veterans depends only in part on some national policy. Its crucial dependence is on the collective activities of many communities. The more nearly reintegration can be put on an individual, man-by-man basis, the more effective it will be. At the same time there will be more opportunity for failure, mistakes, and neglect; for all communities are not equally prepared or able to reintegrate those who return.

The problem of numbers and variety is particularly keen in industrial centers. During the war, employment needs, in the main, are met on a mass basis. A new government office is opened. A thousand stenographers are needed. A thou-

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sand girls are hired in a single day. When the office closes those young women are only a thousand individuals, all of whom have different desires, backgrounds, plans, and prospects. The same is true of a draft board. In a sort of wholesale manner it sends to the military services an assigned number of men each month, and with jarring anonymity they become part of the great mass of servicemen. When the process is reversed the job cannot be done wholesale. What is needed is selectivity and individualized help. But the question is how to help so many at the same time.

Variety is as significant a problem as numbers. The demands upon a community which receives a large group of men, all of them mature and well-balanced, are as nothing compared to the task before a community in which a large proportion of its returning servicemen have mental or physical disabilities. The defense community in which factories are closing and from which workers are emigrating will have very different problems meeting the return of its servicemen and women from those of the community that lost population during the war and with demobilization has both civilian and military personnel returning.

Variety among individuals is even more important. Obviously no two men or women are alike. No two have had identical wartime experiences or have reacted the same to what happened to them. Since all people are always changing, every

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returning veteran will be changed. Limitless varieties of personalities and personal problems will follow attempts by changed veterans to readjust themselves to changed civilians.

No community can fully foresee or be prepared for all the variety of problems that will be precipitated by demobilization. The principal key to any preparation that may be made is thorough knowledge of what has happened to the community during the war. Who have left, how many war workers, how many other civilians? Where did they go, what type of work are they doing, what are the prospects of their return? From such information, thoroughly gathered and imaginatively analyzed, much of the background of the postwar picture of a community can be sketched in. Only details will have to await developments.

These difficult problems of timing, numbers, and variety of discharged men, growing out of recent and present uncertainties about future steps in the demobilization process, can be anticipated. Preparation for them can be made only by intimate acquaintance with the present situation in the community, and then by following through each step as the situation changes. This is to have an awareness of the dynamic in these events. On the broad basis of emerging world problems he who is aware of the dynamic of history is prepared. Through study and observation he is "in

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tune with the trends," and thus has some idea of the direction events are taking. The same is true for the problems of an individual in the process of transition from war to peace. It is the changes constantly taking place from the moment a soldier leaves home until he returns that are formative and set the stage for any problems of readjustment he will have upon discharge. The effective church program—or community program—should be geared to follow through on those changes. An understanding of them will provide a foundation for understanding the discharged man when he returns.

Chaplains who have had months of continuous service with a single outfit report that at induction a man has one attitude toward the world, his country, his friends, and life. This changes when he is in training. It may change again when he embarks for a combat zone, and again when he goes into battle. When he is wounded and sent back to a hospital he may have different attitudes, beliefs, and convictions, which will have shifted once more by the time he returns to the United States. Further changes can be noted when he is discharged and again six months after he re-enters civilian life. One letter sent home from overseas just before he goes into battle may give a very interesting insight into what he felt then, but it can be no sure guide to his attitude two years later. White-hot tensions while facing enemy mortar

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fire may give a man a new evaluation of life, but when the tension is over the insight may have vanished. Miraculous escapes have been numerous. A pilot loses control of a falling plane, but a few thousand feet from the ground it rights itself for no apparent reason and he lands it safely. A tail gunner in the rear portion of a Flying Fortress falls ten thousand feet in the plane broken in two by an explosion, yet lands safely. An airman bails out, his parachute fails to open, and he drops 8,000 feet into the ocean; and his only injury is a broken leg. An engineer picks up a hammer just as a shell explodes near by, killing ten men around him but leaving him unhurt.

These dramatic experiences may change a man permanently within a few minutes or hours. On the other hand, their effects may be forgotten very quickly. The less dramatic experiences such as travel abroad—to India, China, Africa, Europe, or Australia—may cause equally great changes. The dull routine of men who cook for sailors, men who do office work at airports, or perform mechanical jobs with no variation month after month can also change a man.

From every church and community have gone men and women whose varied experiences, whose changing reactions and ideas, make a continuous individual pattern. The only chance a home church has “to be where he is” when he comes

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back is to keep as constantly on the alert as possible to the changing individual pattern.

The community presents the same type of factors. Constant awareness of changes within the community and among those away, and the impact of those who return—this is the primary source of guidance toward the next step.

## IV

Conjecture on what the veteran will be like has become a popular subject for writers and a tempting theme for parlor conversation. But every attempt to classify veterans as a type is bound to fail. There cannot be any single type. The millions of different individuals who form the armed forces of America have gone through millions of different patterns of wartime experiences. All of them will be more or less changed and will return as millions of completely different individuals. Some will fall into groups according to selected areas of experience. Some generalities may be true of men of certain ranks, of certain theaters of combat, of certain branches of the service, of particular denominations, age, marital status, educational background, prewar occupation, moral record, type of wound, or mental condition. But even these are subject to constant change as a man changes age, weight, rank, occupation, theater of combat, physical condition, or mental attitude.

To claim that the veteran will be "bitter," or

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“will come home angry,”<sup>2</sup> is grossly to oversimplify the situation. Were this the only difficulty, preparation for demobilization problems would be easy. Study anger, analyse its cause and effect, set up adequate counseling facilities, get the home folks ready—and the problem could be met. That approach is too simple, too easy. Of course, some soldiers will return angry. Some will come back sad, dejected. Others will be so happy to change their uniforms for civilian clothes that anger will never be a temptation.

We face a much more difficult task. Men of every kind and condition will be thrown with us into the vast uncertainties and crucial tensions of a period when from twenty-five to forty million Americans will be seeking new jobs, new homes, new acquaintances, new adjustments to their community. All of us will be in it together. It is not for us to do things “for the boys.” Rather is it for us to understand the true situation so clearly that we can work with our returned men in a common effort to reorder a meaningful civilian life, and more particularly, to revitalize the Christian church that it may be equal to the opportunity of our age.

<sup>2</sup> As does Willard Waller in *The Veteran Comes Back* (Dryden Press, 1944).

## 2

### EMPLOYMENT

#### I

*DEMOBILIZATION* will be successful if it fits each returning veteran and war worker into a meaningful place in civilian peacetime society. There are two broad essentials in this process for each individual. They constitute the two over-all problems of the demobilization period—employment and reintegration. Each complements the other. Every man and woman who needs work must have work to become once more—and in many cases, for the first time—a contributing member of society. But just a job is not enough. If a veteran obtains a job but because of the color of his skin is unwanted in the community and therefore subjected to discrimination in social contacts, places to live and eat, or in the type of job he is allowed to take, that veteran is not reintegrated.

Both employment and reintegration are much broader problems than their application to veterans. That is the reason demobilization problems are far more difficult than many people think. Ex-

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cept in wartime, America has not had full employment for half a century. The internal migration within the country has been a perennial pattern from earliest Colonial days. These are two old and familiar problems, but both present themselves in new forms. Some of the early migration in America was caused by prospects of greater economic opportunities elsewhere, such as the gold rush and the tidal wave across the prairie states. The migration of the decade before World War II was a migration of despair, forced by unemployment and want, in hope of better conditions elsewhere, but too often ending in public relief. In any kind of migration there is a serious uprooting of people which, if not countered by an equally rapid reintegration, produces a growing group of men, women, and children completely unattached. Such unattached groups, if basic needs of employment, adequate food, and shelter are unmet, can become a vast explosive force in our society. Racial conflicts augment the danger. Now, to that group will return millions of men and women from military service who will need to be reintegrated. As they compete with civilians there will be many possibilities of conflict. Should such conflicts threaten domestic order they would also threaten this country's ability to fulfill her recently assumed international commitments for world order. If the problem of employment is not met, and there is a depression within a few years

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after the war and its first replacement boom, America will become a serious threat to world order.

Demobilization catches our attention because of the tug of human concern and affection for those we know and love who are away. We are as eager as they for the day they can return. What event could be more desired? We look ahead and want to be prepared to help our loved ones over any difficulties that may impede their easy return to civilian life. So we start to study the prospects, and discover at once that the problems of demobilization are not just how "I" can help "my" son or daughter, husband or brother, to make adjustments. Their individual adjustments depend upon the larger problems of general readjustment for all the women and men returning from military service as well as from civilian war work. We are involved more deeply than we expected, for it is impossible to meet those larger problems of general readjustment of millions of people changing their jobs and places of living without meeting the total range of domestic postwar problems. The human side of the transition from war to peace should sensitize us to the interrelation between our own personal problems and the larger issues at stake in our whole society. Perhaps this larger view will help in a measure to retard the bland optimism about our postwar prosperity, and make us a bit more realistic about the serious diffi-

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culties to be met as we cross the uncharted and rough waters of the postwar years.

### II

Returning servicemen and war workers will be caught in the basic cleavage of American political and economic thought—the issue of employment. Those who are not secure in our competitive capitalism favor the extension of collective responsibility for employment. The insecure—those who have no real certainty of employment tomorrow or next week—have little concern for long term problems of freedom and social controls. They must receive a weekly pay envelope, or be hopelessly caught in want and debt. Since they constitute the largest group of voters, they are increasing their political power and effectiveness. They depend on their political power to bring them economic security, since the government—the federal government—alone has sufficient power to control or regulate centralizations of corporate economic power. Even enlarged unions must look to the government for sympathetic assistance or they will be unable to withstand the power of large corporations.

The secure, whether because of wealth, professional status, or economic conviction, do not desire greater security for others because it might be at their own expense. Unless their conception of brotherhood and social concern lifts them

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above the rut of economic self-interest they also use political means to resist change. They are in the fortunate position of being able to afford a profound concern for freedom and individual responsibility. To them free enterprise should be, without question, the *sine qua non* of economic activity. They view the trends of the last ten years in America as the work of subversive forces, and then the exigencies of war, and hope that the peace may bring release from both so that we may return to some predepression bliss.

The country cannot escape this basic struggle. Indeed, it will be at the center of every postwar political and economic decision. Disposal of surplus war goods and plants, reconversion of war industries, the ending of price control and rationing—all of these give opportunity to move either in the direction of greater employment with more security, or toward a return to unregulated competition. The popular vogue among enlightened businessmen and economists is to proclaim the good news that even the secure will profit from more opportunity for the insecure. The Committee for Economic Development has created within itself a formidable agency to dispense optimism about postwar business. Its theory is that if business and industry will plan for a high national income—\$140,000,000,000—and high employment—55,000,000—we will achieve them. The inadequacy of such an employment level for succeeding years

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—with the number of employables increasing 750,000 annually and with technological improvements normally providing a 2 per cent increase in productivity per year and thus reducing to that extent the need for workers—is apparent. Neither the Committee for Economic Development nor any other business agency has been willing to face the real implications of industrial revolution or to appreciate the dynamic nature of the employment problem in this country. Every year it becomes more crucial, yet as a nation we are unprepared for the employment problems of the immediate postwar years. The overemotional and futile palliatives of preferences accorded veterans implies an expectation of depression and an irresponsibility concerning employment for all. But it is stupid to contend that the problems of employment for veterans can be solved except in making certain that all who want work shall have it. Improvement of job counseling, extension of vocational training, expansion of employment services, loans for the purchase of farm or business, are good in themselves, but none of them can create employment. To give the impression that veterans will have jobs because these benefits have been provided, is to give current to a mischievous illusion.

The nation is risking intense frustration for millions of men and women who have borne the burden and heat of battle, who have been told,

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again and again, that they have the nation's undying gratitude, yet who will return without assurance of the opportunity of employment in peacetime civilian life. Abundance of counseling becomes a grim joke. Loans that cannot be repaid are a cruelty. Occupational training followed by unemployment is a waste of money, time, and the precious human resources of the commonwealth. Only when every man and woman able and willing to work is assured an opportunity to contribute his productive capacity to society, is there any real hope that returning veterans will have jobs.

### III

Employment problems are greatly complicated by the wartime paternalism both in defense industries and in military services. There may be some who want the government to underwrite full employment who are moved by laziness and irresponsibility. This is hardly a fair charge to be laid against those who during three or four years of war have lived in a thoroughly paternalistic society.

The anthropologist Margaret Mead has analyzed the defense community in these terms:

A defense housing project is not to be thought of as a permanent community—where people are born, in which they marry and set up homes, and within which they will ultimately be buried. A glance at the

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map is sufficient to show that the largest plot is not, as it would be in an old community, a cemetery, but a garbage disposal plant. There is no provision for children to be born inside the project, nor be married or buried. The whole setup is temporary and may more profitably be compared to a SHIP than to a town. On a ship a group of people are thrown together by the fact that all are going—for a brief period in time—in the same direction, and so have to make the best of each other's company. . . .

In a defense housing project, also, people are there because they are all doing a certain kind of work, in a given plant, for a given period; that period made the more unbearable because its duration is uncertain, and hence the conditions which will come after the war are uncertain. They didn't choose their associates in the project, nor do they feel they would have chosen them. Yet, as on a ship, they would like a chance to get acquainted with other people of the same tastes, or tastes, to which they aspire. All the basic things are arranged for them, houses and furniture, roads, heating, bus service—all is provided. They may kick about details, but at the bottom they are not and cannot be responsible for the over-all plan, if only because they are too tired. To try to get them to form responsible community organizations under these conditions is very difficult. To measure the success of the project by whether or not such organizations are formed is meaningless.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From a brief paper, *Some Problems of Defense Housing*, prepared for the Committee on Food Habits, the National Research Council.

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Military services are more completely paternalistic than civilian life can ever be. Every decision of men and women in lower ranks are pre-determined, all action is controlled by military order and only in rare instances of combat—and among some higher officers—is individual initiative valued or encouraged. A veteran of the last wars writes:

In many respects, the effects of this initial period of military training upon personality are distinctly favorable. Unhappily, it is impossible to subordinate a human being to a machine to such an extent without at the same time damaging and partially paralyzing his intelligence. The strict regimentation of an army, with its concomitant of army politics, often crushes initiative and in the end makes it impossible for the underling to think of new things. Since a man can come to command only after long service in subordinate positions, conservatism is inherent in the army.<sup>2</sup>

The first rule of military necessity is order and obedience, which welds the diverse elements of a fighting force into a single body. Individualism's only place is in its spontaneous irresistability. Within prescribed rank every man dresses alike, all receive the same pay, and have identical duties. Simple necessities of clothing, food, shelter, and transportation are provided.

There is benevolence in the paternalism as well.

<sup>2</sup> Waller, *op. cit.*, p. 23.

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Special qualifications are thoroughly studied to make each man completely efficient in combat. The best clothing, food, and equipment are provided. Medical care at the front lines, especially designed flying togs for high altitudes, clubmobiles with doughnuts and coffee are provided—"everything for the boys." Civilian actions augment the paternalism. A community sends a five-dollar Christmas gift to each of its servicemen—a practice that it can hardly continue after the war. Free cigarettes, free lunches at railroad stations, free books, free entertainment—all are provided for "the boys." The perfectly natural and genuine urge to do something for those who are fighting for us becomes part of the total system of dependency under which a man lives as long as he is in uniform.

Men become accustomed to dependency and only a few resist it. The idea that all servicemen are impatient to leave the paternalism of military life and re-enter the struggle of "free enterprise" is a delusion. No matter how much we may believe that economic dependency is morally debilitating, veterans of a long war will undoubtedly choose to suffer the afflictions of a benevolent economy rather than enjoy the blessings of competition.

The time factor is crucial here. The longer a man has received his pay, food, clothing, shelter, orders, and entertainment by "government issue,"

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the deeper will be ingrained any tendency he may have to desire a similar paternalism after his discharge. Difficulties of transition from dependency to independency are greatly heightened for every man who has remained in service for several years.

All this is apt to bring about an irresistible desire among returning servicemen and unemployed war workers to join forces for a more paternalistic social order. Thus the basic social economic struggle in America may quickly become identified as a conflict between veterans and civilians. There will be bitter resistance to extended governmental control just as there will be ideological support of the inevitable trend. Churches must try to understand the essential issue in the conflict.

The church has a profound social tradition to which it can turn—a tradition of concern for the poor, the downtrodden, the dispossessed, of opposition to the profiteer, and of condemnation of those who feel no concern for their brothers in the family of mankind. The individualism of Christianity has been alive for many centuries. It supports with more validity the responsibility of society as a whole for the full development and opportunity of every individual, than it does the theory of according privilege and opportunity to a few at the expense of many. Says William Temple: "There is an authentic tradition of Christian social teaching . . . proving its vitality . . . by showing a capacity to relate itself effectively to

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changing conditions and circumstances."<sup>3</sup> This tradition has been revitalized in England through such men as Charles Kingsley, Henry Scott Holland, William Temple, and in America through Walter Rauschenbusch, Washington Gladden, Francis G. Peabody, and Francis J. McConnell. It is through the extension and continuation of this genuine social concern within Christianity that the churches can serve society in the midst of new tensions and make the kind of significant appeal to the veterans that will give them an abiding reason to share the fellowship of the Christian church.

### IV

The church's unique responsibility in the employment problem is not to set up employment committees to compete with government or private employment agencies. Few volunteer employment committees are qualified in personnel work or counseling to give any real help to the veteran. The United States Employment Service has competent trained workers, has facilities for job analysis, and knows the most likely openings for employment. Such an agency, particularly if it remains a federal agency instead of being returned to the states after the war, provides the best facilities for employment aid and should be used by the entire community.

<sup>3</sup> *Christianity and Social Order* (Penguin Books, Inc., 1942), p. 35.

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The federal system of re-employment is complicated by the provision of the Selective Service Act of 1940 which stipulates that everyone drafted from a permanent job shall have that job when he returns, or a job of like seniority, status, and pay. Unfortunately, this law was designed not for a war period but to cover the program of one year's military training established by the Selective Service Act. On a one-year basis it might be possible to assure men re-employment in their old jobs, but not on a four-year basis. Because this inadequate law was extended for the war period its value has declined each day the war has continued. About 25 per cent of men in uniform have any re-employment rights—the others had been unemployed or had been in school, or held jobs from which men had been drafted previously so they have no rights to those jobs. Even among those with such rights under the law, only a few will be aided, because the law provides three exceptions: a man shall receive his old job back *if* the job is still there; *if* he is physically able to take it; and *if* it is reasonable (economically) for his employer to re-employ him. These three exceptions virtually destroy any remaining effectiveness of the law, yet Selective Service has set up a tremendous organization to "get a job for every veteran." Every draft board is supposed to have two or more re-employment committeemen, each handling no more than twenty veterans at one time. Selective Service has

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made no attempt to appoint men qualified in employment counseling or personnel work. The policy, as one official expressed it, is "to appoint prominent men of the community who will bring social pressure to bear on anyone refusing to employ returning men."

This shortsighted and ill-conceived program—essentially unjust to the veteran because it tends to put him back into his prewar mould—would be serious if Selective Service should become a permanent federal agency, through the establishment of universal military training, and be given the continued responsibility for re-employment.

With such agencies in the field, the church can perform greater and more significant service by using its influence to see that society takes responsibility for providing sufficient jobs so that qualified employment agencies can guide men into their proper places. The church can bring the impact of Christian concern upon the extension of opportunity for meaningful employment and the elimination of occupations that destroy personality and undermine character. The church can continue to show the price mankind has had to pay in blighted lives, in corrupt character and wasted human resources, through the continuation of a competitive materialistic society which has not only set class against class, but has judged all social welfare by its profits. America still pays a tragic price for unemployment in thwarted hu-

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man possibilities, poor housing, slums, poverty, inadequate medical care, and an uneducated populace. Employment at wages sufficient to provide the basic necessities of food, clothing, shelter, medical care, education, and healthful recreation for every worker and his family is the church's concern. Decent and meaningful family and community life cannot be maintained without such an economic foundation. The triumph of individual human spirits over poverty and limited opportunity demonstrates the vitality of their own character, but does not justify a social order in which a majority of its members are denied opportunity and the necessities of life, among which is the assurance of employment.

It may be the church's task—if we fail to achieve full employment—to interpret the resulting crisis. It is easy for those with security to damn any uprising among the insecure, but the church can demonstrate a deeper appreciation of human needs and keep ever clear the deeper significance of social conflicts. The church is called to help improve the lot of those without opportunity just as it is called to restrain the actions of the privileged who would oppose their self-assertion.

The church's responsibility for immediate problems of employment for veterans is the same as its long-range social responsibility. To forget that continuing responsibility in superficial efforts to help returning servicemen is to do them and

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all members of society a grave disservice. It is this easy and understandable temptation which should be resisted at all times if the church is going to fulfill the commitments it has made to so many of its members now in military service. The church will not be swayed by the temptation to exploit their immediate desires at the expense of their ultimate welfare.

# 3

## COMMUNITY REINTEGRATION

### I

*REINTEGRATION* depends upon employment, but its significance reaches far beyond. Employment is a basic necessity to the incorporation of an individual into society. Without it, most efforts at integration are futile.

The persistent accompaniment of war is the uprooting of millions of men and women, military and civilian. Physical uprooting is most obvious. Fourteen million servicemen and women have been uprooted. Some of them have been away from home for several years. An equal number of war workers with their families have built up new ties in new communities from which they may have to move again when the war is over. Thousands of wives of servicemen have been on the move, going from camp to camp with their husbands. From Southern farms to both Southern and Northern cities have gone scores of thousands of Negroes, many of whom will not want to return but for whom there are inadequate living

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or social facilities at present. American wartime industry now includes workers from Mexico and the Caribbean area, and Indians from their reservations, all of whom have experienced the profound uprooting of wartime. Even more tragic was the result of moving Japanese-Americans from the West Coast to relocation centers. There are so many groups in our society today without rootage that one of the major social problems that the nation must meet for many years to come is how to build a stable society out of a highly transient population.

Physical uprooting would not create such difficulties if it were not for the accompaniment of uprooted loyalties, associations, friendships, and habits. Changed environment often brings changed conduct, and changed convictions. It is impossible to scramble the population of a nation without also scrambling every element of social relationship, custom, and tradition. Some individuals may be able to resist such changes, but most people give in to them.

Among those who may be physically uprooted but do not experience major changes in other phases of their life are many who have been able to maintain unbroken ties of home friendship, interest, and activity with communities they have left. When all ties are broken the reintegration process must start over again at the beginning in making new ties.

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This is the essential requirement for reintegration—the building of a web of many relationships which are ties that bind us securely into the life of the community. One tie is not enough. Good as church membership may be, if that is the only tie an individual has with a community he can hardly have a sense of belonging to the whole community. It is when ties to church, home, and school are woven into ties with friends, business, social or professional organizations, recreational activity—when men and women are bound together in all the normal round of community activities—that integration is attained. The reestablishment of such ties is the task reintegration demands after this war. It is basically a task for local communities. The government can do little about it. Only when every agency, club, group, and interest, of the community pulls its weight in the process is there a chance of success.

In one sense the church is just one of the community agencies in which individuals may find a sense of association and make a contribution to the community's life. In a deeper sense the church has a unique call to help total reintegration become the goal of the community.

The hindrances to reintegration in most communities are primarily ethical—the failure of men to remember the brotherhood of men. Barriers of race and position, occupation and means, length of residence, divide most communities so there

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is little sense of "common-unity" between those living in exclusive neighborhoods and those living near the railroad tracks. Veterans will return to both these types of homes and the claim is now made that both will be treated equally well. But the habits of a community are not easily changed—even in wartime—and it is not difficult to anticipate great differences in the treatment of veterans as they identify themselves with one class or another. The church has a vast opportunity now to show the anti-Christian character of the cleavages which divide most communities, and to proclaim and practice a significant reconciliatory function between all classes of the community.

There will be resistance to reintegration both from those returning and from those who have stayed at home. The church should anticipate this. Among the returning men who will resist reintegration are those who have risen to responsible positions in military rank and do not want to return, say, to clerking in a shoe store. Men who have serious disabilities, or have been disfigured, may dread facing acquaintances in the home town. Men whose morals have given way, those who have broken with their wives, those who like military life and an entirely male society, those who prefer the freedom of little responsibility, those who feel the urge to roam—all these will resist efforts of the community for their reintegration, and will augment the number of roving, un-

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attached individuals within the nation, dangerous both to themselves and to society.

The same resistance may be made by Negroes and Japanese-Americans who never can be certain they will be welcome in a community. Their skepticism is well grounded by our treatment of them, and their failure to have a sense of association is a direct result of the racial bigotry from which America is still unhappily not free.

## II

Every community is given an unusual opportunity from now until all her servicemen and women have returned to prepare the basis for their reintegration. It is easier to re-establish ties to the community now than it will be under the full impact of demobilization. The town paper is read more avidly by a serviceman than by a discharged veteran at home. Now is the crucial time. Now there is a chance to let those away know they will find a welcome and a place at home. Now is the time to check up on every tie that will hold them while they are away and will draw them when they return. Except in very large communities—perhaps those over 100,000—it should be possible without undue effort to check the town honor roll and see that each individual name has ties to several groups or agencies in the community. Any community should be able to start a program to encourage new ties now before it is too

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late. If each serviceman were to have some contact with the organization or its individuals with whom he worked before he went away, with some social group, lodge, club or society, and with some church or religious organization, his chances of returning to that community and being able to re-enter civilian life with comparative ease would be greatly improved. Obviously, most communities were not that closely knit together before the war. To build so many ties now would revitalize community life. Failure to integrate all members of the community in prewar years makes the problem of reintegration after the war even more acute.

The community with multiple appeals and opportunities has a better chance to draw and hold returning men. A rural county in Virginia has instituted a long-range program to study the interests and attachments of those gone from their community and is preparing to receive each one back. To whatever extent such agencies as the Farm Bureau, the American Legion, the Chamber of Commerce, churches, schools, and lodges do the same thing in any community, to that extent the town will be ready.

As men return to their home communities, reintegration begins by their picking up unbroken ties and forming around them a new circle of acquaintances and activities. Men who have been gone only a few months, or who have not been

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sent overseas, so they could still read the same magazines, see the same movies, and come home frequently on furlough, will find it much easier to feel at home on the golf course, in the local Grange, at Kiwanis meetings, or at high school basketball games, than those who have been overseas or in combat for many months. No two men will have the same associations or the same attitudes toward community life.

A veterans' information center, helpful in technical details of rights and benefits, for referrals to agencies set up to meet particular needs, cannot be the final answer for the community wishing to make all veterans feel at home. The problem is broader, and it cannot be solved by establishing facilities to which veterans must apply for help. Many men definitely needing help will never come to ask for it. A community cannot afford to depend for the major tasks of reintegration on agencies that are specially designed to assist servicemen when they return. True reintegration can be achieved only by those forces within the community which will continue to function in the future. If churches and clubs, business agencies and schools fail to work together to welcome all who return and get them interested in long-range activities, no effort of special agencies can do the task. The function of special servicemen's agencies or committees, then, should be to prod the

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permanent groups and agencies to do their own job—not to do it in their place.

### III

The community is the basic point of contact in the reintegration of returning war workers and servicemen because it can deal with the individual as an individual. The Veterans' Administration, already responsible for administering assistance for all veterans of previous wars, will have the added burden of millions more after this war. Regardless of the sincere efforts it will make, such a vast agency can be only impersonal. It must function according to its general policies and cannot allow any but the slightest variations for an individual. In the home town, however, where a serviceman is called by his first name, where his football record, his girl friends, his parents, and his wartime experiences are known by his neighbors, his needs will be considered not on the basis of some general policy but rather on the basis of welcoming him as a fellow townsman.

A community's preparation for demobilization should utilize to the fullest extent the opportunity for individual contact with those who are away, and give a man-by-man welcome when they return. The community can prepare for this in advance, and its preparation will have effect if it honestly wants its servicemen to return and lets them know it. A demobilization worker for the

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Y.M.C.A. following the last war reported in 1919: "It is notable that the desire to return to their home towns varies among ex-servicemen almost proportionately to the enterprise and 'get up' of these towns. A really live town is likely to get back the greater part of its servicemen, while the other kind eventually will lose them all. Much has been said about the soldier coming back with new ideas of life and affairs. The statement is unqualifiedly true. But the trouble is that, while this is accepted as a fact, no visible effort has heretofore been made to adjust the community to his changing ideas."<sup>1</sup>

### IV

Every community can develop a simple program of preparation for demobilization if it seriously desires to do it. It should approach the problem as a whole, united in a community-wide effort. This unity is essential as the framework into which the veteran will fit. In developing a program such unity would grow by making a central over-all committee or agency responsible. The committee should include representatives of churches, welfare agencies, social groups, service clubs, women's organizations, business, and labor. Their responsibility would be to make general community-wide plans, to see that the various local agencies are prepared to do their share, and

<sup>1</sup> Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*, Apr. 3, 1919.

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to make sure that the total program is effective.

The first activity of the community committee or agency should be to familiarize themselves with certain facts about those who have gone away—to learn such things as: How many are in military service? How many are war workers? What proportion had jobs entering service? How much education has each completed? The ages, marital status, and family of each. How many were in business for themselves? What percentage owned property? (Owning property is a particularly strong hold.) What activities in the community did each share? Are there members of the family or relatives still living in the community? Only by knowing its own situation thoroughly can a community know the starting points in reintegration.

The community committee should also know what has happened to each one since he left. What has been the record of advances in rank? Where have servicemen been stationed? How much moving about have the war workers and wives done? Particularly should the postwar plans of those away be studied—and studied continuously. No man in service or war worker in a defense center can plan exactly what he or she will do after the war. Ideas, desires, and plans change, and the sequence of change is important for the community to know in order to give the right help.

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The community committee should plan some definite activities by which the whole community may keep in touch with absent persons. It should realize that the whole community wants them back and when they return they will be welcomed into the entire life of the community. Bangor, Maine, issues a special magazine each month which it sends to several thousand servicemen. Thus, news of the home town and all the things that go on there reach the men regularly. Other cities see that the daily and weekly paper is sent regularly to every serviceman. Sometimes special folders or bulletins are prepared. One of the most effective special projects of one community—Mount Kisco, New York—was to send a small portfolio of pictures of such familiar sights as the railroad station, park, library, high school, corner drug store, churches, streets, city hall, and the old river bridge, inserting the latest pictures of each man's family, and leaving space for him to add pictures he had taken or obtained since entering service.

Within the framework of a community committee's work the activities of various community groups become even more significant. The central committee should go over the entire list of individuals absent from the community and see that each one is in touch with two or more groups or organizations in the community. Churches, schools, clubs, business firms have lists of their

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men and women in service. These could easily be checked against the town list (but should include civilians as well as servicemen and women). Those not on any list could be selected or assigned to two or more agencies. If all names are not chosen it might be necessary to set up a sub-committee with special responsibility to keep contact with the others and see what can be done to relate them to some community organization.

At the same time, the central committee should see that the community's postwar preparedness is assured. Is the community worth returning to? What reasons are there for those away to want to come back? If they do come back will there be employment for them? No community is independent in deciding its own economic fate. It is part of the total economy of the nation, just as America is a part of the world economy. At each level we are dependent upon the larger framework within which we live. Yet each community can determine its own action in the light of nationwide conditions. It can study such postwar prospects as: Which industries and businesses will continue in this community? Will wartime employment levels be maintained? What varieties of work are offered here? What opportunities are there for cultural interests? Are the public schools adequate? Are there ample recreational opportunities? Are the churches serving the whole com-

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munity? Are there any deep conflicts between groups in the community?<sup>2</sup>

With a background of study of those away and the community's preparedness for their return, the central committee can begin a general program to educate the people of the community in what may eventuate and in their duties. They should know the facts about those who may return. They should be told honestly how ready the community is. They should be instructed in how to meet and welcome those returning, whether disabled or not. Proper education should reduce greatly the dangers of conflict between community groups and create an understanding of the relationship between problems the community must face and the larger problems of the country as a whole.

This education, on a continuous long-term basis, can be carried on through newspapers, movies, special meetings, and within groups and organizations.

Finally, the central committee should see that adequate facilities are set up to welcome and assist those now returning. The United States Employment Service office, any Veterans' Administration facility, and local Selective Service boards have been assigned the task of working together in any community where two or more of

<sup>2</sup> Guides for studying the strictly economic factors of the community are available from the United States Department of Commerce, the United States Chamber of Commerce, and the Committee for Economic Development.

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them are located to co-ordinate activities related to governmental programs and to see that adequate information service is available. No one pattern has been developed by the co-ordinating office in Washington—the Office of Retraining and Re-employment—so these three agencies must co-operate with whatever community agencies are functioning.

The names of those who have returned can be obtained from the re-employment committeeman on each draft board. These persons should be followed up individually to make the community's welcome genuine and its help available. Some of those who have returned should be included in the membership of the central planning committee as soon as possible.

Such a program may be modified by any community to fit local conditions, and should be subject to change in keeping with changing circumstances. But the main points are essential if a community hopes to do its share in reintegrating those who return.

### V

The good community, worthy of those who have sacrificed much for their nation, and worth returning to, consciously assumes its responsibility to society and thus shares in meeting the problems of the whole nation. It constantly endeavors to assure meaningful and productive employment for all members of the community as a social re-

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sponsibility. The good community seeks to develop a strong community loyalty around a social good rather than upon pride in some benevolent circumstance such as its lakeside beauty, its nearness to mountains, or its historical monuments. It encourages family life by improving opportunities for clean living, healthful recreation, and chances for family participation in community events. It takes positive steps to end racial tensions by striving to eliminate all inequality between racial groups or any restriction of economic opportunity. It does not allow slums to blight the lives of men, women, and children, or crime and delinquency to destroy the future potential of its citizenry. The good community makes certain its recreation *recreates* and does not debilitate those who participate, and takes civic pride in the extent of provisions made. It uses its educational facilities to meet all needs of training and instruction for both young and old, using its schools to meet any special community needs as well as the educational task. The good community has churches that work together in infusing spiritual qualities into the whole fabric of common life, keenly sensitive to moral and ethical responsibilities and alert in meeting them. To such a community the veteran will want to return.

### VI

The church has special responsibilities and opportunities within the community, but that re-

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sponsibility varies according to the locale. In terms of social welfare, the church in a city of 100,000 should co-operate with welfare agencies rather than compete with them. In such a city a minister's task is primarily to know how to make correct referral so that each individual asking his advice may receive expert assistance. It is unwise for a minister to try to assist an unemployed family when experienced social workers are available. It would be as foolish for him to counsel a man with a distinct paranoia when competent psychiatrists are at hand, as it would be to try to treat an abscessed tooth when a dentist's office is next door. The church or the minister truly desiring to help returning veterans with occupational, financial, or emotional problems should be prepared to direct them to the individuals or agencies qualified to give them the proper assistance.

In smaller communities the church may not have welfare agencies, employment offices, counseling clinics to which veterans may be referred. Then the church's responsibility—and the minister's duty, since he, in most cases, must represent the church in meeting that responsibility—is very different. It may be necessary for the minister to take the initiative in getting together the able individuals of the town to develop some system to meet foreseeable problems. A doctor may know enough about psychiatry to help someone who returns with nervous difficulties. A schoolteacher

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or principal may make special preparation for rudimentary vocational guidance. Together these people could acquaint themselves with similar near-by facilities. It would not be difficult to develop a directory of the nearest agencies, such as the Red Cross, Veterans' Administration, United States Employment Service, Selective Service board, or vocational clinic. Referrals could be made to these when necessary. In this way the church would perform a greatly needed and very significant function in co-ordinating information regarding facilities within the community, and referring those in need to the appropriate agencies.

Churches need always to beware of the temptation to think they are better able to help just because they feel their motivation is on a high plane. They must make a distinction between their moral concern for people and their needs, and their lack of experience in the techniques of expressing that concern in giving expert assistance. Any church can escape that temptation if it keeps the nature of its community responsibility clearly in mind.

As an agency in the community the church has a unique function (which we will consider in more detail later), but part of its mission in the world is to minister to humanity—at its doorstep as well as far away. Whatever affects the lives of men and women for good or for ill is of concern to the church. Every church is in part a social grouping of the community and, as such, it is an outlet for

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group fellowship and social activity. But the church is always more. It is a manifestation of a wider fellowship reaching around the world and across the centuries, with a mission to perform in serving the present age.

Closer to its unique function is the opportunity for the church in the community to demonstrate the unity of all mankind as a family. It is tragic that the church does not always do so, that it often allows the divisions of secular society and unchristian attitudes to reflect themselves within the churches. Yet the church has a greater mission which, strengthened by its heritage of brotherhood, can help unite the community. It should always keep the entire community in its concern and never allow the divisions between churches to hamper the clear call of Christian concern for community needs.

Churches do not need to take over the community functions of other agencies, nor should they hesitate to turn over to the community all responsibility for continuing services in which the church has been a pioneer. The pattern has been repeated again and again. The church was a pioneer in schools, hospitals, and community centers, but these are now largely the province of others. The church should take advantage of its freedom from such continuing responsibility to be, first, a *motivator* of other community agencies, keeping alive their ethical sense and devotion to service, and,

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second, an *explorer* of new needs to which the community should be awakened and for which agencies of service should be instituted. It is in this role that the church can perform a tremendous service in spurring a community to its total responsibility in the demobilization process and thus escape the dangers of emotional surges in superficial and essentially harmful ventures.

The church can perform its greatest service in working with other community agencies and groups. As pointed out above, the secret of reintegration is in re-establishing many ties to a community. The church has greater rather than less opportunity where those ties are many and varied. The church which opposes a community youth center and program because it might compete with the church's youth organization, both fails to see its responsibility to the community and lacks faith in the vitality or value of its own program. Churches often feel that school, lodge, club, and business activities are competitors of the church's work. Rather, the church should encourage the multiplicity of ties, help build the stability of community life, and keep alive a sense of concern for the quality of the tie.

## VII

A serious test of the church's sincerity in the reintegration process comes in relation to veterans' organizations. The sorry record of veterans'

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organizations in some communities in peacetime has often left the church with no recourse but to feel that a choice must be made between them. Some posts did not keep faith with the greater function a veterans' organization could perform. Yet, within the larger programs of the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars were elements of authentic and valid concerns. The civilian may not understand the deeply etched determination of a soldier that his closest friend wounded in action shall receive the best medical care at home. Every man who has survived combat knows that he might have been killed instead of those who lost their lives. Out of this experience comes a genuinely humane and truly commendable desire on the part of veterans to work together to get the nation to pay its proper debts to those who have suffered.

Just as we accept without question college alumni associations, so we should expect and encourage the formation of many groups among men with a common background of experience in a certain theater of war, in a certain branch of service, or in a particular fighting unit. Within the ranks of such groups church members may make decided contributions to community life, and through these associations veterans should find a continuing sense of fellowship. Continuous effort would have to be made among veterans' organizations—as among churches or clubs—to

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keep from centering all activities and interests in the past. The larger function should be to channel ability and concern into forward-looking contributions to the life of the community, not just to maintain old loyalties. Those who have returned should not be given reason to think they have to form veterans' organizations because they will not be accepted elsewhere, or to fear that once shunted into such a group they will be left on the defensive. Rather, the community must understand that veterans have a contribution to make and in their group life they have a valid reason for staying together.

## 4

### KEEPING CHURCH TIES

#### I

*IT IS AN EASY* fallacy to assume that because demobilization from World War II will present new and vastly difficult problems for the church that the churches are unprepared. Detractors both within and outside the church have been using the uncertainties of the demobilization process to prophesy a widespread disaffection among veterans. The church is accused of every failure in the book. Yet the churches—while being maligned—have been quietly at work in what is undoubtedly the most genuine and significant preparation for demobilization that could be devised. In a series of fifteen nation-wide seminars conducted by the adult department of the Methodist Church Board of Education, 800 delegates from 400 churches reported on their work in keeping their ties with servicemen and women. After all duplications—where two or more churches were doing the same thing—were eliminated, 132 *different* things were listed.

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While cynics have pointed to the failure of church leaders to prepare for postwar issues, and special pleaders have shouted, "The church *must* do this or that," the churches actually have gone ahead laying effective foundations for the return of their veterans. Every church does not have a complete or perfect program. That could not be. Some are doing nothing, but "the church" should not be judged by the failure of general church agencies to plan adequately. The grass-roots program is what matters most in the long run, because the local church and community are the crucial points of contact for reintegration.

Most of the elements of local church program outlined below are based on observations of activities actually being carried on in many churches. Acknowledgment cannot be given to each, but credit is due them. Here is the attempt only to put the many immediate and practical suggestions and ideas together to show a possible program for a local church.

## II

In addition to any responsibility which the church has for participating in the general process of reintegration of those returning into the life of the community, it bears an even greater responsibility for reintegrating its own members back into its own life. The fellowship of the church is not broken by the absence of its mem-

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bers. It continues through years of absence, but it must be kept alive if it is to grow. Upon return to his home community and his home church a veteran should be able to pick up the strands of activity in the church's life, building upon the ties maintained during his absence, and continue as a participating member of the fellowship of the church. This is the objective of the church in the demobilization process, and it is to this task that the church should give continuing attention as long as the process goes on.

To carry out such a task, each local church must assume a role somewhat similar to that of each community—it is the agency through which the crucial work of reintegration must be done. General church bodies and agencies can help local churches only in their preparations for the work ahead. They cannot do the job for the church. A general board of missions may help clarify the church's mission in domestic affairs of the nation, but it cannot do the work of the local church in meeting those problems which descend upon a community. It is true that demobilization is too big a task for the whole church. Unless it is the objective of innumerable local churches the church as a whole will fail. Returning veterans will not become members of some over-all board or commission. They are members of the local church. That must be the center of the church's approach

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to the tremendous problems of reintegration during the immediate postwar years.

Each church needs a well-defined strategy of approach for its own organizational life, though the methods will vary according to the people in the church and the problems of the community. In general, the four phases of that strategy would be: study, maintaining contacts, welcoming those now returning, and planning for postwar reintegration.

### III

The church, like the community, will be greatly aided in doing its job among the returning men by having some committee or group responsible for planning its general program. In some churches it is called the Victory Committee, in others a Servicemen's Committee. Some churches have a Director of Demobilization with various committees working under him. In any case, the committee ought to be responsible to the official body of the church—board of deacons, official board, or session. Thus constituted, the committee would be an official part of the church taking responsibility in this phase of its work.

The first point in the strategy of such a committee would be the thorough study of the problems involved. Just as a community committee would study those who are away from the community, so the church committee should study

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those absent from the church. How many are church members? How many were active in the church? What was their educational background? What were their ages? Are some of them married, have they children, do they own their own homes, are their families still in the community? What proportion of them were active in other community or social groups, what were their occupations, what are the prospects for their return to this community? Such data would give a valuable background of the group with which the committee is to deal. This is the beginning of work on an individual basis—the genius of the local approach—which is essential if reintegration is to be successful. It might be valuable to consult the church record of each member to find out which groups within the church he shared and what record there is of his interests and attainments. Along with such study there would be the possibility of collecting evidences of the changes and new interests occasioned by the war. Letters that have been written to the church or its groups might be used to give a better picture of what has happened to each individual and his reactions. The more that is known about each individual the better chance the church has to adjust its program to his interests and attitudes.

A second part of the study to be conducted by a church committee is to learn what is being planned by the community and the nation to

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meet the problems of the demobilization process. It is important that the church should know what is being done by the Veterans' Administration, Selective Service, veterans' organizations, mental hygiene associations, welfare agencies, interdenominational agencies, and its own national offices, so that it may benefit from the larger framework within which it must work. The volume of printed material in this field is constantly increasing, and the church committee should keep an up-to-date file of such material available for reference. One or two members of the committee might be assigned to collect and study such material, keeping the rest of the members informed of latest developments. In many cases the church committee will be called on to act as an information center for veterans, and it should be in a position to give accurate information.

A third part of the study would be to read all the new books written on problems of demobilization, and articles on the subject by reporters who have been with the fighting men at the fronts and can give invaluable information regarding the serviceman's viewpoints. Among the former should be included: *Soldier to Civilian*, by George K. Pratt; and *The Veteran Comes Back*, by Willard Waller. The latter would include innumerable good magazine articles and such books as: *Brave Men*, by Ernie Pyle; *Tarawa—The Story of a Battle*, by Robert Sherrod; *The Battle Is the Pay-Off*,

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by Ralph Ingersoll; *To All Hands*, by John Mason Brown; and *Guadalcanal Diary*, by Richard Tregaskis. Through these it is possible for the safe and protected civilian to feel something of what a fighting man goes through, and to have, perhaps, a better appreciation of what his reactions may be upon his return to civilian life. At all times the committee should endeavor to understand the full range of the problems to be met, and try to understand each person who returns and the particular attitudes he may have toward his own experiences.

If the committee will make this phase of study complete in its three parts it will lay a very firm foundation on which it can build its own work and the program of its church, both in relation to the individuals with whom it will deal and to the problems of the period ahead.

### IV

The second phase of a church committee's strategy would be to maintain continuous contact with each individual who went from the church. Many churches have kept some contact but not continuous. Many have kept a continuous contact without realizing the opportunities to make it a constructive relationship.

No church is relieved from responsibility for the spiritual nurture and growth of its members just because they happen to be away in war work

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or in military service. Services conducted by chaplains are not substitutes for the home church, nor are the services provided by churches near camps or in connection with servicemen's centers in cities. These services are certainly needed, but the home church is still where each individual has his membership and from which he should continue to receive spiritual nurture. It is possible to approximate nearly every normal activity of the church with a parallel activity for absent members. Worship services, group contacts, religious reading, missionary activities, and stewardship can all be carried on in modified form, and together would constitute a well-rounded constructive program of contact for the church with those represented on the service flag.

Servicemen feel related to the worship of the home church through many kinds of special services conducted by innumerable churches. Some churches observe the birthday of each serviceman by including his favorite hymn as a part of the Sunday service nearest his birthday and sending him a copy of the church bulletin for that Sunday. A Presbyterian church in Kansas City held a round-the-world service. A special bulletin was printed in advance including the words of the scripture lesson, the responsive reading, and the hymns, and a summary of what the minister planned to say. The cover pictured a clock giving the time in such distant cities as New York, Lon-

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don, Cairo, Bombay, Chungking, Nome, and San Francisco, when it was eleven o'clock on Sunday morning in Kansas City. With the bulletin went a letter to every man suggesting that he should read the service by himself at the same hour his home church held the special service. How close he must have felt to his church!

The First Methodist Church in Mason City, Iowa, had pictures taken of a full Sunday morning service, one picture looking toward the front of the church showing the minister and the choir, and three other pictures showing the congregation. They were printed on a large Christmas card which could be folded to 8½ by 11 inches. The cards were sent to each of the servicemen and women of the church. How could they help but feel themselves a part of that church? There was the familiar scene, and they could see the faces of their own family and friends.

A Methodist church in Montrose, Colorado, has a member who during Sunday morning service sketches on blank spaces in the church bulletin some scene in the church—the minister, a member of the congregation, the choir, a stained-glass window, in fact, anything she feels will be interesting. She jots down some notes on the minister's sermon, and then sends the bulletin to one of the church's servicemen. This personal touch is appreciated beyond measure.

Many churches have special candle-lighting

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services in which members of the family come forward and light a candle for each absent member. The members of the First Baptist Church, Syracuse, New York, decided to send their Christmas Eve service to their young people in the armed forces. They practiced carols, prepared readings, completed talks; and several weeks in advance they made a recording of the service exactly as it would be held the night before Christmas. One record was sent to each of those away from that church. Letters of appreciation poured in to the church. One member—a soldier in Italy—walked seven miles to find a phonograph so he could hear the record.

Through various forms of correspondence many channels are available to maintain the ties of acquaintance, friendship, and group interest with those away. If the serviceman's family belongs to the church they could keep him informed of church activities. The minister, also, should write regularly to each absent member, giving a second contact through correspondence. But there are other ties that can be maintained. Every member of a class or group should keep in touch with absent members of that class or group. Collective letters are sometimes sent, and groups often keep up a systematic correspondence which each member takes turns writing. Birthday and Christmas cards may be sent. Personal contacts can be renewed during furloughs. Many churches

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mail a monthly bulletin which contains a variety of items of interest to men and women in the service. Usually they include a note from the minister, excerpts from letters of other servicemen, news of happenings around the town, and of recent events in the church. These are invaluable, for they give an opportunity to continue a broader contact than is possible through individual or even group correspondence. One other excellent type of contact through writing is to assign some individual in the church to correspond with each absent member. A Methodist church in Washington, Pennsylvania, calls these "spiritual parents." They remember servicemen in their prayers, write regularly, send remembrances on special days, and work to keep the church prepared for their return. The church, then, which wishes to use to the full contacts through correspondence can do so through five channels: parents, minister, group or class, a specially designated individual, and the more inclusive relationship of some general church bulletin or news sheet.

A third church tie can be maintained with those who are away—religious literature. Why should those leaving military service be "demobilized" from their religious reading? This should be one of the easiest forms of continuing with those who are away the constructive religious activities they may have shared before they left and hope to continue when they return. Bible reading can be easily con-

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tinued. In one church a member sees each man before he leaves, gives him a paper with sixty Bible references, suggests the reading of one of those passages each day, since if he were still at home he would be reading those passages. In this way a Bible-reading circle around the world has been built up among all servicemen and women of the church. The same procedure could be instituted among all members of the church. The minister might even fit his Sunday messages to the passage selected for Sunday reading, and thus the entire church—at home and away—could be bound together in the experience of common Bible reading. Devotional literature can be used just as effectively. Books of prayers and daily devotional readings have been very popular and are sent to men by many churches. But often churches, having sent Bibles and devotional literature, look for some other type of reading and forget the abundance of religious periodical literature available. If a man was in college and read the student publication of his church why should he not go on reading that publication? If a young woman was an officer in the youth organization and a regular reader of the church's youth publication why should she not continue to receive it while she is away? In many cases those who are away appreciate receiving magazines regularly. Others might wish to receive different kinds of religious literature, perhaps pamphlets or bulle-

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tins on subjects in which they are interested. The church committee might assign several individuals to collect all sorts of denominational and interdenominational literature, go through it carefully and pick out those which absent members might like to receive regularly.

The fourth channel for regular contact might be through the missionary activities and interests of the church. Back from overseas areas have come many moving stories of the discovery of the work carried on for years by missionaries. Dr. Henry P. Van Dusen's recent book, *They Found the Church There*, documents these discoveries. Battle lines have crossed and recrossed the lines of assistance which the churches have extended around the world in the missionary enterprise. Not every man who sees overseas mission stations, not every one who talks with a missionary, is going to find himself suddenly converted to the cause of world missions. Yet, among the millions away will be many on whom will rest the future leadership of the church in its mission around the world. They are seeing much more than their parents and friends have ever been privileged to see. They have come into personal contact with work that the rest of us have given to support, but only have been able to read about in our church publications. The local church can begin building upon those experiences by tying them up with the missionary interest in the home church. Some

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churches use maps of the world giving the location of missionary work being carried on by their church, using ribbons or strings extending from the location of the home church to the approximate location of each serviceman. This gives a rather dramatic picture of the spread of the church's membership across the world against the background of the work the church has supported in its mission program. From denominational headquarters it is possible to get lists of all the mission stations in each area of the world, to send it to servicemen who may be stationed there. The church might write and suggest that if men are ever near any of the places indicated they might visit the mission and—equally important—write to the home church reporting on what they saw. The same thing is possible in terms of home missions. So many churches forget that they help support an amazing variety of home mission projects, located in all parts of the country. Sending personal representatives in the form of servicemen to visit such work would give each church a much more interesting relationship to the work it supports. A Canton, Ohio, church that had supported two war orphans in England learned that two of its members had been sent to the British Isles. The names and addresses of the orphans were forwarded with the suggestion that the men should visit them. They did this, and back to the church came gratifying letters assuring the home

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church of the value of the support they had given. Whatever form the contact may take, every church can build upon the missionary interest being created among its members overseas.

A fifth contact can be financial. Some churches hesitate to send appeals for pledges to their members who are away, feeling that since the servicemen are fighting and sometimes giving their lives for them the least the home church can do is to relieve them of any financial obligation. This implies, however, that Christian stewardship is a matter of convenience. It is much kinder to the men—and a much more valid approach for the church—to ask them to continue their giving whether at home or away. The home church might well establish a policy, as some churches have done, of setting aside all income from those in service in a special fund reserved until their return, and leaving to their decision the purpose for which it will be spent. The giving of money may thus be the fifth form of continuing contact with the home church.

Benefits come to any church that establishes one or another of these forms of contact, but preparation for demobilization will have much more chance of success if the church committee can institute all five forms of contact with each absent member: through worship, correspondence, literature, missions, and money. Each complements the other. Each can make a constructive contribu-

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tion to the spiritual welfare of those away. Each has its own place in preparing the veteran for taking up a meaningful place in the life of the church when he returns. The principle is sound—to do as many things as possible with those away that will not have to be changed when they return, but that can go on as normal and continuing parts of their share in the church's program.

Maintaining a continuous constructive contact is the most important task to which the church can set itself now. True, some men have returned, but the much larger number are still away and will be for some time. If the right kind of contact is kept with them the solid foundation is already laid on which can be built their readjustments upon returning. If no contact is kept the problem of approaching them after demobilization is made almost insurmountable. If you have been writing regularly to a friend in the South Pacific, you do not have to emphasize your great concern and interest in his welfare when he returns. He will know that. If you have not written, no amount of concern you profess will make much difference to him. He will know that you did not care enough when he was away.

## V

Into every community of the country now are coming men who have been discharged from military service. The church has the immediate task

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to welcome them and help their reintegration into both the church and the community. Even though preparation may not have been made by continuous contact with them during their absence, the church must now do what it can. The discharge record indicates that a very large proportion of men are returning to communities other than their home towns. Forty per cent of the men discharged from one Army separation center did not want to return to their home communities. The results of a later Army poll showed that 47 per cent of the doctors polled (about one third of Army doctors) did not want to return to the community they left. Thus, into new communities are coming men who had no previous contact with those communities. Fortunately, it is not difficult to find jobs now, so the employment problem is essentially one of wise vocational guidance. For the communities to which they come, however, it is very difficult to establish contact with men who do not make their presence known. When contacts are made the simple rule of naturalness should always guide. These simple suggestions may help us:

Remember he has not shared your experiences. . . .

Expect him to be different in some ways. . . .

Take time to get acquainted again and to find ways of getting along together. . . .

Be non-shockable about his new slants on life. . . .

Be friendly, even warm, but not over-cheery. . . .

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Treat him as an essentially normal, upstanding, competent person, not as an invalid. . . .

Let him talk—or keep silent—about his war experiences. . . .

If he is injured, nevertheless treat him naturally, as you always have. . . .

Create an atmosphere of expectancy: encourage him to take up his favorite hobby or sport, to go back to work as soon as he is able, and to lead a normal social life, but avoid pushing or regulating him. . . .

Give him time. . . .

Help and reassure him about his religious development. . . .

Get professional help if it is needed. Don't just muddle through. . . .

Let your own faith and beauty of spirit be your chief stock in trade. . . .

Above all, be a good listener. . . .

And remember—he is not first an ex-service man. He is first a person, a human being, a child of God. He is not a problem. But, like other people, he has problems, and we may help him solve them.<sup>1</sup>

As men return one by one the church can start to bridge any gulfs of feeling between them and civilians. The simple practice of inviting the first four or five veterans to the minister's home, along with an equal number of men who have been deferred for one reason or another, would probably

<sup>1</sup> From the pamphlet *How Families Can Help*, No. 7 in the series "The Church and Returning Service Personnel," published by the Christian Commission for Camp and Defense Communities and the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America.

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be one of the most fruitful first steps. Out of that may grow naturally the form of church group or activity which should be continued after the war. It would be a recognition that those returning should not have to wait until the war is over to be given consideration. It would bring together those who would have been together had not wartime service separated them. It would provide an opportunity for the ability and insight of the men now returning to be used in helping the church develop its more extensive program that must come later.

## VI

Obviously, the final phase of the church's planning is its advance preparation for the period when general demobilization will be in full swing. In this we look through a dark glass, for the uncertainties of demobilization are only second to the uncertainties of war. It is possible, however, to make general preparation by educating the congregation to meet the problems ahead and to the part all members of the church can play in welcoming those returning. Though the minister is expected to represent the church, the minister is not the only member of the church with an opportunity to greet those who return. If a church school teacher is unprepared to understand the veteran, if the officer of a men's group takes the wrong attitude, the church's ef-

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fectiveness will suffer. The congregation should be informed at all times of the work being done by the church committee, and—as with the community committee—the objective of the church committee should be to get every group, club, or class to shoulder its share of responsibility.

Particularly, preparation should be given wives of servicemen. Every couple that has been separated for months or years will have readjustment difficulties to overcome. That can be anticipated. The minister may prepare himself to give counsel in such cases, but he knows in advance that only a few of the couples of his church are likely to come to him with their problems. Every couple can be helped, however, by a class or group for wives of servicemen, in which the wives are helped to understand the problems that they are likely to meet, and shown how they can be solved. In such a group it would be valuable to review the studies made by the church committee and get an understanding of general nation-wide plans for demobilization. The group should become familiar with governmental agencies at work on plans. They should know something of the legislation that affects veterans' benefits, and the aid they may receive in education, starting a business, or getting pensions. A psychiatrist can help the wives understand some of the nervous disturbances veterans may have, while a doctor can give them a better understanding of the effects of physical disabili-

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ties. Members could have group reading periods, choosing books written about front line experiences. This will give them a better appreciation of what combat does to fighting men.

### VII

The minister's place in the church's demobilization preparation is decisive. The minister knows that limitless personal frustrations and tragedies, broken bodies and lives, disappointed ambitions and sudden changes of fortune during a war period leave in their wake untold personal problems for which men and women need relief and guidance. Chaplains know the great need for counseling among those most intimately affected by war. Back to civilian churches are going to come millions of men and women, re-uprooted by demobilization, who will need the assistance of wise and skillful counseling. The minister must be prepared. But preparation is more complex than reading a book on psychology. To the practical understanding of psychology must be added a deep understanding of the total impact of war on the lives of people. He must understand the great variety of problems for which men seek help, and the larger implications of seemingly insignificant troubles. And with it all, the minister must be aware of the limitations of his own ability. If he has read one book on psychiatry he does not promptly set out to psychoanalyse the next indi-

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vidual who comes to him with a problem. It is as important for him to recognize the difficulties he is not competent to meet—and refer them to experts—as it is for him to distinguish spiritual breakdown and know how to correct religious ignorance.

Ministers near college or university centers should take advantage of any opportunities to do advanced work in counseling. Those not so fortunate must depend upon their reading and observation if they are to be prepared, first in the general field of counseling, and secondly in the special problems likely to grow out of the war.

Any study the minister may make of the personal problems of adjustment during the demobilization period will be as significant for his preaching as for his counseling. Preaching may be the first point of contact the minister has with those returning. In the pulpit he can demonstrate his understanding of the problems which members of his congregation face and have faced. He cannot cover up his deeper feelings and attitudes; and here, often, the listener decides whether or not he will go to the minister for personal help.

Many problems find their focus in the minister's preaching. Men who return with lax moral habits may wish to overcome them, but they will be repelled by bland and unthinking condemnation from the pulpit. For instance, a minister should not knowingly give his annual temperance

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sermon the first Sunday one of his members who has learned to drink while away returns to church, for it could easily close a door between the minister and the veteran. Other veterans may come back with a deep sense of guilt for their part in the brutality of war. How will the minister preach about guilt? In his congregation are members who have lost sons or husbands in the war. How will the minister preach about death? Among the church members are many who have lost faith in justice and good will in international relations and think America should show her might in a new imperialism. How will the minister preach about world order? And then there will be cynicism—the cynicism of those who have no concern for the welfare of other people but who have enjoyed the prosperity of war, and also the cynicism of the perfectionists who find in the war ample justification for an easy and irresponsible pacifism. How will the minister preach to the cynics? Yes, how about the minister who is himself a pacifist, who has become cynical himself, who brings into the pulpit his own failure to understand the mighty convulsions through which the nations of the world are passing? The minister's preaching cannot escape involvement in the problems that grow with the transition from war to peace. How shall he preach?

A special group of ministers are the returning chaplains. They will have as great an opportunity

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for a unique service to the church in the demobilization period as they had to servicemen during the war. Few civilian ministers can share with equal intimacy the life of their parishioners as chaplains do the life of their men. Chaplains have been with their men aboard ships in combat and up to the front line in ground actions. They have seen the suffering and testing of war in the lives of those to whom they ministered.

The chaplaincy services were greatly improved between the two world wars. Higher requirements of training and personality, and the necessity of ecclesiastical endorsement have meant a better caliber of men in this strategic service. Already this improvement has reflected itself among servicemen in a greater appreciation of religion and the church. The wide-awake chaplains have used the opportunities of military service to present the Christian way of life to men otherwise antagonistic, to preach the gospel to men who had never been inside a civilian church, and to demonstrate to many contemporary pagans the personal qualities of life that should distinguish a Christian. The church owes a great debt to its ministers who have given themselves—and still give themselves—to the rigorous service of the chaplaincy.

When the chaplains return they will share the veterans' difficulties of readjustment to civilian life. Just because of that sharing they should have

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a formative word to say in the church's approach to veterans. This is not to imply that the church must accept every counsel of a former chaplain as ultimate wisdom. Some have limited abilities. Some have reveled in their freedom from institutional responsibilities—financing and managing a church, working with children's classes and youth groups, and the many committees that exercise a democratic control of the local church program. Some do not relish the idea of returning to the ordinary routine of parish service. During the war they have worked with large groups of men and some will prefer to continue in the chaplaincy rather than return to churches where much of the work is among women. Except in the Navy, where chaplains are assigned various morale duties—recreation, education, entertainment programs—as well as religious functions, the chaplain's work consists almost exclusively of conducting services and personal pastoral counseling. It will take him time to readjust himself to the different demands made upon a civilian minister. This is particularly true for the young men who went into the chaplaincy from seminary and have never had any parish experience.

Churches should maintain their ties with chaplains as well as with other servicemen. Groups of ministers, whether in a ministerial association, conference, presbytery, convention, or diocese, should be scrupulous in their contact with fellow

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ministers in the chaplaincy. When the chaplains return the church will need the rich store of experience which has been theirs. They can help others appreciate the significance of military service for men who have been in uniform. They should be able to assist greatly in the transfer of values from intense wartime religious experiences into the continuing life of the church. They should be able to help the church develop a fresh and vital program for young people. In addition, many chaplains who served overseas have been privileged to have firsthand acquaintance with the people of other nations. They have seen the world work of the church, and should have a distinct perspective on the problems of world order and international relations.

## 5

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*WE HAVE NOW* reviewed some of the practical and immediate activities by which a local church can lay a groundwork for meeting the problems of the full demobilization period. So far, we have considered church tasks as similar to the community task. But it is necessary to go beyond that. Reintegration into the church's life cannot be accomplished by what others can do for veterans. It depends, first of all, on what happens within the mind and heart of the person who returns. Returning to the church and becoming a part of it places different demands upon an individual from those needed for returning to the community and sharing its life. As the church has a unique mission in society, it lays peculiar demands upon those who would share that mission.

We must now consider some of the issues involved in the church's program for its demobilized young men and women. A major problem is what kind of church group shall receive the veterans? Will it be the present youth and young adult groups, or will new groups be needed?

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### I

Churches have become aware recently of a gap in their programs for young men and women during the period of their transition from youth to adulthood. The startling record of those who on graduating from youth groups have also "graduated" from the church has awakened religious educators to the need for something to fill the gap. Thus was "young adult work" begun. It is fortunate that the past dozen years have seen some slight beginnings in a work which will be at the heart of the church's task in demobilization. The largest group of young adults in the church will be the returning servicemen and women. But, at present, the church is seriously unprepared for meeting the needs of its young adults. Present concepts of young adult work and present young adult organizations of the churches are both inadequate to serve either the church or the veterans when demobilization comes.

Unfortunately, the idea of young adult work has been identified with a particular age group. What is needed is a fresh appreciation of what young men and women experience when they take the step from youth to adulthood. This would lead to some fundamental changes in the church's program for its young adults.

The major characteristic of the young adult is that he is going on his own. Out of a dependent

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past in which he had little responsibility for his own food, shelter, and clothing, for his social or economic status, in which his routine of life was determined by school and home schedules, in which advancement was by meeting clearly prescribed requirements—out of this a young person faces adult life in which he will be expected to be independent, to determine, in the main, his own social status, take financial and family responsibilities, to vote, to choose an occupation. Up to this time most of his characteristics depended on his age, grade in school, clothes he wore, social groups he could enter—what might be called *horizontal* divisions. But from this point on it is not age that makes the chief differences. It is his interest, attitude, conviction, economic status, experience, intellectual advance. The divisions among men become what might be called *vertical*, splitting adults up into many groups with little relation to age. The way to get ahead becomes much less certain. From then on there are no graduations, rather, a permanent course is to be charted and decisions that are made are usually determinative for the rest of one's life.

The process of young adulthood is almost identical with the process of demobilization. The discharged soldier, sailor, or marine leaves a largely dependent status to go on his own. In military service his activities, duties, and responsibilities were determined almost entirely by rank and

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branch of service. The paternalism of military life—essential to a cohesive fighting force—is very different from the patterns of civilian life with limitless variations of social position, manner of dress, type of home, and economic status. The contrast between 2,500 military occupations and 30,000 civilian occupations illustrates the difference. The veteran's age is of little importance. Each one will come from a prescribed type of living to the freedom of civilian adult life, going through steps very similar to a college student at graduation. Veterans will come back as men—not boys—and any general attempt to put them in youth groups will not succeed. They are young adults. The church's approach to them in its group activities should be almost identical to its approach to other young adults. The key to activities for them should not be a repetition of what they have been doing but an introduction to the patterns in which they will live for years to come.

The type of young adult program and set-up projected by most denominations and the International Council of Religious Education is almost identical with the structure and approach of youth groups. Even the names used are similar—Youth Fellowship, and Young Adult Fellowship. The argument usually presented for this similarity is that those who leave youth groups will feel more at home in a familiar type of organization and program than in some new pattern, and thus

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the church has a better chance to hold them. Such an approach is unrealistic.

The most unrealistic element in present young adult programs is the age range of twenty-three to thirty-five years. Some people do not become adults until they are twenty-three, but the vast majority of American youth become adults before that age. Graduation from high school—only a small proportion go to college—comes at eighteen or nineteen. The average age at which young American women marry is twenty-one. Establishing their homes and going on their own financially comes shortly afterward. At twenty-one they can vote. Adulthood—for the majority of youth—begins between eighteen and twenty-one.

The significance of the transition from youth to adulthood has almost no relation to age. In fact, to imply that young adults are people of a certain age is to confuse the very problem that needs clarification. To set a bottom age limit necessitates a top limit. Young adults, if *from* some age have to be *to* some age, and then the automatic implication is that before that age they are something less than adults, and after it "adults," whatever that may mean. What is needed is not the designation of a prescribed age, but some facility and opportunity for assistance in the *process* of becoming an adult.

Age limits in group activities in a church involves graduation from one group to another.

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Borrowed from the public school, the graduation principle has been set at the center of the religious education program of the church. Modern religious education in its eagerness to departmentalize, with graduation from one department to another, has paid the very high price of continuity. No wonder there is a serious problem of losses when young people graduate from youth groups. The idea of continuity of growth and the need for continuity of fellowship have been neglected, and the young adult problem has resulted. Real continuity of experience with progressive growth to the inner life of the church cannot be maintained if the thing which holds a group together is only the loose bond of similarity of age. The use of the term young adult as a proper noun—Young Adult—augments the danger of developing a loyalty to an age grouping. When a strictly young adult group is formed it should select a name that would be as meaningful and dignified when the members are grandparents as when they are high school graduates. A church should encourage every such group to continue its fellowship and function as a unit in the larger program of the church as long as possible.

Another serious weakness of the present young adult programs of the churches is the continuation of outdated youth programs and forms of organization—many of them inadequate even for youth—into a situation where different patterns

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are needed. To continue youth patterns into young adult work only delays—it cannot stop—the losses it purports to prevent.

Traditionally, the program of the youth group in a church is designed to constitute within itself a well-rounded and complete program of Christian life for each member. Worship, study, fellowship, community service, missions, recreation, evangelism, stewardship—all of these are given a predetermined place in the program of the youth group. The center around which all of this revolves is an age grouping, not the larger life of the church. Hymns are selected because they are “youth” hymns, not because they are the great and significant hymns of the church. Worship is conducted with specially prepared services designed to foster a youth worship experience, rather than to interpret and employ the church’s central worship services for the youth of the church. So it is with each phase. When such a center is projected, there is no framework within which young men and women can move with any sense of continuity into the adult life of the church.

For the average church adult, public worship is provided at the regular Sunday morning or evening service. Service opportunities are the regular work of boards and committees in the varied program of the church. The adult’s contribution to missions is through the regular missionary giving of the church. At nearly every step the adult

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participates in the total life of the church, but youth only in a "youth" tangent of the church, and the latter rarely prepares one for the former. Young adult work, rather than taking patterns from youth work, should much more logically take its patterns from properly developed adult work. The earlier a church can introduce its young men and women, and with them its returning veterans, into the continuing activities of the church, and the earlier it can draw upon the total church program for a large portion of its youth activities, the greater possibility it will have for effective young adult work.

## II

The church needs a realistic group program for veterans—as for other young adults—which will provide a center of loyalty that can be as valid at sixty as at twenty-five. The only adequate foundation is participation in the total range of activities of the church. Setting up a group for veterans or for young adults in general may be helpful, but it is not enough. Such a group might make a specific contribution but the task of reintegration is larger and can be accomplished only when men and women are active participants in all the regular activities of the church. If that program is too narrow—if it consists only of worship with no adequate study, fellowship, or service activities for adult members—then setting up a special

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group to provide these for young adults is only a temporary panacea. The church grows only as an increasing proportion of its membership becomes a part of its inner, vital life. Among these returning young adults are to be found the materiel of the church's growing edge.

The center of loyalty that can be continuous throughout life is the church itself, not some particular group within the church. Let those who are to be its future leaders gather in the central worship services of the church. Let them serve on the boards and committees that plan and supervise the functions of the church. Let them join in the fellowship of the entire church membership, and study according to their own background of understanding and interest.

In such a setting young adult work—and specifically work with veterans—can be carried on. The function of local church young adult work is to encourage all the young adults of the church to share the whole life of the church. A veterans' committee should have exactly the same objective.

There are some who see the demobilization period as an opportunity to remake the church, since they are painfully aware of its weaknesses and failures. They would contend that the returning veteran should come back with a refining fire and a prophetic zeal to revitalize the decadent civilian church. The civilian church may be decadent in some of its parts. Its denominational divisions

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bring a divisiveness to many communities. It is not always aware of its mission in the world or even in this land. Its leadership is sometimes asleep or frequently so concerned for its institutionalized welfare that it forgets the gospel which gave it a reason for existence. All this may be true, but to expect veterans to correct such conditions when they return illustrates a failure to understand the true nature of the church and the way it works. Why should veterans be expected to correct the ills of the church? Is that not our own task? Correcting the weaknesses and failures of the Christian churches is a perennial task, for many of those weaknesses are the long heritage of an ancient past. They can be righted only through the long years of the future. There are some who imply that those returning can be reintegrated only if the church into which they are received is different from the present church. If remaking the church must precede reintegration, then only frustration awaits us. The sense of belonging comes first. It is needed at once. Then those who have returned, joining with us who have remained at home, can set ourselves at the long, long task of keeping the Christian church true to her heritage and loyal to the gospel of her Master.

The church has a great reservoir of ability, energy, devotion, and insight among veterans and other young adults. The potential is being wasted when it is not used to infuse the total life of the

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church. Returning veterans need no separate groups set up to catch and hold their interest. Even where such groups are formed they should be considered only supplementary to the major program of the church. The most significant young adult work is done when young women are drawn into an active participation in the general women's organization of the church, and young men are drawn into equally active participation in the men's organization—when both become a part of the larger fellowship the church provides, and are active in the agencies responsible for the church's whole life.

It is at this point that the greatest single weakness of the church's program becomes apparent—its failure to develop men's work so that it will measure up to the church's need of such work. What men's organization could most of the churches offer to returning servicemen? How many important places are open on the church's boards and committees for veterans? What facilities has the church developed either for training them in the church's essential function or for channeling their abilities and energies to perform the church's mission in their community or around the world? Every minister has a great opportunity to develop a fresh approach to young men's work—an approach that can produce churchmen.

Veterans will come back from a male society in which some have lived for years. Many will have

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to relearn how to mingle with women. In most churches there will be more opportunity for veterans to find outlets for their desire to be in mixed groups than for their desire—which may be very strong at times—also to have a vital fellowship with other men of similar background and interest.

This need not lead to the formation of church veterans' groups. It can become a new type of activity for all the young men of the church—those discharged and those deferred. Old patterns and forms of activity cannot be set down haphazardly for such a group. Rather is this an opportunity for the church to incorporate them into its life and work. Around the world these men have been wielding the mightiest instruments of war—destroying life, blasting cities, wrecking the productive capacity of nations. Now they can turn the same energy and ability to binding up the nations' wounds; within the only institution devoted to world-encircling reconstruction and reconciliation they can become the leaders of the Christian church. The tasks of peace are greater than the tasks of war—and far more difficult. They demand not only the force of arms but the might of the spirit as well. They, too, demand discipline of body and mind for—the *service* of mankind. They require, as every age has required, a powerful, vital, and dynamic church to keep alive among men the vision of a better world and the determi-

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nation to work for it. The church needs churchmen, and it needs them *now*.

There are many different organizational forms which young men's work can take to develop churchmanship. Whatever the form, the program should rise around a thorough study of church history—both past and current—and a systematic program of service in every phase of church activities. The study would have to be continuous, for the course of the church's history has been long and varied and most of us are tragically ignorant of what the church has done since the last chapter of Acts was written. It would have to be continuous, for the present work of the church around the world is so vast that no one can hope to keep up with the most significant developments without continual effort.

Both an acquaintance with the facts of the church's history and an appreciation of its historic significance in Western civilization would come from such a study.<sup>1</sup> Following a study of historical backgrounds, the group should make an equally thorough study of the present world work of the church, the place of world missions, and the latest developments of the trend toward unity among

<sup>1</sup> Suggested books for making a study of church history: Kenneth S. Latourette, *Anno Domini*; James Moffatt, *The Thrill of Tradition*; Cyril S. Richardson, *The Church Through the Centuries*; David C. Somervell, *A Short History of Our Religion*; William W. Sweet, *The Story of Religion in America*.

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the churches.<sup>2</sup> As a part of its study of the church's present work the group should know about the structure and procedures of its own denomination, the forms of church organization recommended to local churches, and the way its own denomination shares in the interdenominational work of the Federal Council of Churches, the Home Missions Council, the Foreign Missions Conference, and the International Council of Religious Education.

The program of service should not wait until the completion of study. It should start at once. Its first objective would be to introduce young men to the working of the church boards and committees by a system of rotation so that the whole group could become familiar with each phase of local church activities. The same approach can be made to the community service which a church should be performing. Those who seek to become churchmen should learn how to work with community social service agencies, how to survey the community, how to correct degrading moral conditions, and how to demonstrate the positive influence of Christianity in all social relationships.

Obviously, the greatest hindrance to such a de-

<sup>2</sup> Suggested books on the church's world work: William E. Hocking, *Re-thinking Missions*; Hendrik Kraemer, *The Christian Message in a non-Christian World*; Edmund D. Soper, *The Philosophy of the Christian World Mission*; *The World Mission of the Church* (Report of the Madras Conference, 1938).

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velopment of churchmanship is the limited appreciation among many local churches of the work they should be doing. This results in an equally limited program which its young men can share. Yet there is a crucial opportunity for veterans who have felt the unity of the churches in religious life at the front to lead the way toward a new unity among the churches of every community. Here is an opportunity for ministers to set their young men—and particularly returning veterans—at the church's essential task so that they may help the church, in the words of the Oxford Conference, "be in very deed the church—confessing the true faith, committed to the fulfilment of the will of Christ, its only Lord, and united in Him in a fellowship of love and service."

### III

Some of those in uniform have had very moving religious experiences in the midst of combat. They can never explain why bullets missed them, why birds landed on rafts, or airplanes came through flak unmarked; but they have a profound sense of God's presence that surely saved them. To some this experience means little now, for the time of combat is passed and the routine of life has dulled the memory. To others no vision ever came, no angels sang, no presence rode along in the cockpit, no miraculous salvation was their lot. Yet they, too, sought the solace of spiritual things,

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attended services, talked with the chaplain, read their Bibles, and prayed when the going was tough. Despite this, for both Christian and pagan, the religious activities in military service have little relation to the life of the church. Most of the form is gone, and only the preaching and counseling remain. To maintain an institution like the church seems a remote and meaningless chore, even though the reason for their fighting was to defend the institutions of the civilization to which they belong.

It is easy to prophesy doom for a church that does not change its program to fit a sudden change of events. Dissatisfaction boils over at the conservatism of the brotherhood, and tempts the poorly grounded to believe the church is dead. But its very conservatism—its tie to tradition—is the greatest strength of the church and its greatest contribution to society. Christianity cannot be a disembodied spirit. The church is the body of Christ. It is not perfect, but it has brought men of every age into a fellowship where they could “belong” among the saints and be able to meet the constant frustrations of life. The church has repeatedly protested against the human desire for symbol and ritual, and yet has ever developed new symbols and new rituals by which men could express their spiritual concern, and has been the constant inspirer of new expressions of a social passion. By “being in very deed the church” does

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the institution make its greatest contribution to those who now seek meaning in a world of confusion, and a sense of permanency in the midst of change.

The church *is* called to cleanse her own life and to renew her mission of service to the world. Both of these tasks demand men and women who know what the church should be and should do because they know what the church has been and has done. The tradition from which the church has grown is her greatest source of insight and power for both these tasks. There is at the heart of the twenty-century-old Christian tradition a vitality which is constantly recreating life and ever prompting men to new forms of service. The spirit is not dead, but we have failed so often to introduce the coming generation to the record of that spirit at work through the centuries. The church needs churchmen—men who will start at the beginning and discover what the church has been so they may know what she ought to be; men who, when they know what should be done, what the church needs and calls them to do, will do it. Inherent within the church is a task with a call as powerful as any challenge. This is no spurious demand to destroy the church and build some new device for the roving spirits of men. This is a race which we are called to run with the patience of the undauntables. It is a genuine call that the church be true to its essential mission in the world,

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for which it has a charter from the Master. Unless the church can live in this age—as in every other—by being true to its essential self then it can have no other valid appeal. There is no place for a church that measures its mission by its momentary appeal to one group in society, whether veteran or civilian. The task of the church, in this hour as in every other, is to serve men best by building them into its ongoing life, into a fellowship that saves them as it calls them to serve others.

Those who are now returning to civilian life will need some deep and compelling reason for returning to the church if they are to remain faithful. Let them be churchmen, let them know what the church really is, tell them of its vast calling to the world, teach them the mighty record of its past, build them into its inner life. Thus, they may become the new vital churchmen the Christian church so desperately needs.

# 6

## A PERMANENT CONCERN

### I

*NO PROPHET IS* needed to remind us that the aftermath of this war, though different from that of two decades ago, will surely bring a slump of morals and morale. The intense exertion of a nation year after year cannot continue without a setback after the fighting has ended and the men have begun to return. "We've won," we say—and then we shall want to relax. The trials and troubles of the peace will be left to someone else, and the promises of wartime will be forgotten. The picture is not hard to discern—when current events are no longer the primary interest, when as little work as possible, and a long vacation, are the ambition of every man. Those are the days when inertia will cover us as a blanket, and the needs of the world will have to scream before they are heard.

In that day the simple-minded can once more claim to have an easy solution for the problems of war, and the sentimentalist can cajole his neighbors with the comfortable belief that wars are

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made by the makers of guns. Yet, under the hardened surface of life, the brew of new struggles will simmer. The grass may cover war's scars on the earth; but the spirits of men, once blighted by war, pass on that blight. The disease of the world must yet be cured, and the wreckage of war must yet be cleared away. It is then that we should fear for the church's commitments made during the war to the men and women whose names crowd the honor rolls in churches across the land. Will they be forgotten, too?

It will be easy to forget. Their bodies—that is, of those who do return—will be among us. They will walk our streets and sit beside us in the pew. Our minds can be only upon our own concerns, for we have no memory of the bitter struggles of others. We will not shudder when we hear a plane, or the crack that sounds like a shot. Our sleep will not be broken by dreams of combat and violence at the front line. To us a shadow will bring no memory of snipers. But the veterans among us will have so much to remember—the wounds, the weariness, the sleepless nights, the limp body of a dying friend being carried to the rear. So much was so dramatic, from the day they donned the uniform until the discharge came—travel in strange places, fighting in China, flying over Europe, feeling at ease in uniform and in combat around the world. It will be hard to settle down. They will remember the days of action. To

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be a soldier was *something*. They will remember when bands played and the U.S.O. was free, and doughnuts and hot coffee were passed out at the station. They will not forget when girls were always glad to go out with a serviceman and it did not make much difference what one did, since tomorrow might be the end. Yes, the nights at the veterans' clubhouse revive their memories and once more give them all a touch of the importance they enjoyed during the war. And they think: "Others don't appreciate us, but we saved them."

How easy it will be for a gulf to grow up between us who stayed at home and those we sent away to fight for us! When that gulf grows wider and wider, will we remember what we said during the war about the church's responsibility to the veteran?

### II

Concern for the veteran can take form both in the attitudes of church leaders and members and in the setting up of permanent agencies within the local church or its national offices. Such committees or agencies in a local church should grow out of the wartime services the church attempts to perform. In general, the church should see its duty to follow up the long-term consequences of the war in the lives of the members of the church and community. It should, at the same time, keep alive a concern within the church for men in

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near-by hospitals and see that the aid of the church is available to serve them in every possible way. Further, it should maintain continuous working relationships with veterans' organizations in the community so that the church and such organizations may never drift apart.

On the national level the churches need to commit themselves now for a permanent concern with the larger problems growing out of military service. The crucial significance of policies made by the Veterans' Administration should receive constant scrutiny by the churches. Full-time liaison should be maintained with national offices of veterans' organizations. Nation-wide developments need to be watched and members of local churches kept informed of things they can do to fulfill their wartime commitments to their members. Perennially there will be need for lifting the quality of memorial services for those who gave their lives, so that these services will not become maudlin but will be instead worthy remembrances of the cause for which so many died.

There is still a greater commitment the church can make—that war shall not happen again. It is not peace alone the church is called to proclaim. The desire for peace is not enough to bring an end to the recurring struggles between nations. This the Christian church should know best, for it is called to build the spiritual foundations on which the altar of peace can stand. Let the church again

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renew her devotion to that mighty call, not just for those who have died, but for the living and the yet unborn, that the broken lives and mangled bodies of no new generation need ever be mankind's price for his sins. Let the church labor undaunted to draw more closely the whole family of mankind into the brotherhood which owns the Almighty God as Father, and together may all men be led to build the instruments of a lasting peace.

Now is the time for the church to commit itself to the permanent concern it has for the veterans of World War II. We dare not allow ourselves to forget, for they will not forget, and if we in the church forget, who else will remember?

We who are the church must not forget those whose wounds were so grievous that they have not returned to us but have been sent to veterans' hospitals to spend their lives in loneliness—some in mere existence.

We must not forget those who did not come back—those who were made to pay the supreme sacrifice for the world's ills, and now lie below white crosses around the world.

We must not forget those among us who still bear the marks of battle. The empty sleeve, the crutch or cane, must never stand between them and a full opportunity to share the life of the community and of the church. They need no special

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sympathy. They need a fair chance among their fellows.

We must not forget those whose wounds cannot be seen, who bear within their minds unseen scars that may mark them as nervous cases, that may make them unable to adjust themselves to the normal routine of community life. They must not be marked men.

We must not forget those whose memories haunt them, who, although whole and well still, cannot live down the errors they made in conduct and habit, and who bring back to civilian life the ragged end of living. We dare not cast them out.

We must not forget the children and the families which have suffered the loss of a father or his prolonged absence. For years to come they will be a part of the life of those whom the church seeks to serve.

*The church must remember.*













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